

Government Administration and Elections Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5417

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE USE OF

Title: BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY TO MANAGE ELECTOR INFORMATION.

Vote Date: 3/6/2019

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/27/2019

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee
Rep. Buckbee, 67th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

The bill creates a task force to study blockchain technology. The agenda should look at the feasibility of implementing blockchain technology, the election processes that would have to change in order to use the technology and the costs and benefits relating to implementing the technology to manage elector information, such as security concerns. The task force has a completion date to report its recommendations to the GAE committee by January 1, 2020.

Substitute Language: Defines the specialty fields required for appointment to the task force.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Secretary of the State Denise W. Merrill: Secretary Merrill testified that a legislative study is the best way to vet new technologies. Partners in the task force should include a cybersecurity expert, elections systems technology expert, a member of an organization focused on election integrity, a representative from a municipal organization such as CCM, COST or the Connecticut chapter of GMIS and a member of the University of Connecticut Center for Voting Technology Research (UConn Voter Center).

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Connecticut Town Clerks Association, Inc., Mark Bernacki: The elimination of the requirement to have the original absentee ballot application on file reduces tracking

requirements, streamlines absentee ballot counting and will reduce the number of rejected absentee ballots when the applicant fails to produce the original application. In addition, eliminating the requirement of circulators of nominating petitions to directly submit them to the Secretary of State will reduce delays in processing.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Executive Director of CT Voters Count, Luther Weeks: The bill tries to address a problem that does not exist, that is only fashionable.

**Reported by: Maureen O'Reilly
Assistant Clerk**

March 18, 2019